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Amendments to the Drawings:

The attached sheets of drawings includes changes to Figs. 2A and 7. In Fig. 2A, one of the numbers "222" has been changed to --232--. In Fig. 7, the numbers 710, 720 and 730 have been added.

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REMARKS

Applicants' attorney hereby affirms the election of Group II, claims 15-28 and 41-42. The non-elected claims have been cancelled without prejudice above.

The drawings and specification have been amended to address paragraphs 10-12 of the office action.

Claims 15, 24 and 25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Waldenrath et al. (US 5,236,657). Claims 15 and 24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Hara et al. (US 5,618,567). Claims 15, 16 and 19-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Nakagawa (US 5,575,056). Claim 15 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Rhodes, Jr. et al. (US 4,806,094). Claims 15 and 24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by van Dongen (EP 343,755 A2). Claims 15 and 26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Simko (US 3,403,883). Claims 15, 24 and 25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Fuji et al. (US 4,491,556). Claim 41 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Hettinga (US 5,762,852). Claims 15, 41 and 42 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Kobayashi et al. (US 6,846,169). Claims 15 and 24-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Oyama (US 5,406,699). Claims 15 and 28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by JP 5-8251. Claim 27 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over

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Byrne (US 4,162,138). The examiner is requested to reconsider these rejections.

The examiner indicated that claims 17, 18, 22 and 23 contained patentable subject matter.

Claims 17 and 22 have been converted from dependent form into independent form. This change in form does not narrow or limit the scope of the claims. The independent claims which claims 17 and 22 were formerly dependent upon have not been cancelled. Therefore, the full scope of the doctrine of equivalents should apply to claims 17 and 22 as if they were originally presented in independent form when the application was filed. In view of paragraph 27 of the office action, claims 17 and 22 should be in condition for allowance.

Claims 15 and 41 have been amended above to clarify applicants' claimed invention. These claims have been amended to clarify that the label is clamped at its perimeter within the mould void. Support for this amendment can be found in figures 1c-e and figures 2a-c. Figures 1c-e show how the edge of the fabric laminate is received in the continuous groove around the perimeter of the fabric laminate. The continuous groove is formed by the shape of the clamping ribs 214 that extend into the mould cavity and clamp the fabric laminate at its perimeter as shown in figures 2a-c. Embodiments of the present invention provide a method and apparatus for In-mould Labelling. A label is clamped in a mould void by clamping ribs that extend into the mould void. The clamping ribs clamp the label at its perimeter. Clamping the label at its perimeter not only securely holds the label in the mould void,

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but the clamping ribs also provide the slots and grooves around the label in the molded product that the edges of the label are received within to provide a high quality finish.

The Examiner alleges that claims 15, 24 and 25 are anticipated by US 5,236,657 (Waldenrath et al.). The Examiner alleges that Waldenrath discloses the production of multilayer moldings from a sheet 6 injection molded behind with a resin in a two part mould. The sheet 6 is deformed to the shape of the mould by high pressure fluid. The resin is then injected into the mould cavity. In one embodiment the sheet 6 is held in place in the mould by hold down devices 7 that extend into the mould cavity to secure the sheet 6. In this embodiment, Waldenrath does not disclose clamping means that clamp a label at its perimeter.

In an alternative embodiment, annular hold down device 27 clamps the sheet 26. The annular hold down device 27 clamps the edge of the sheet 26. In this embodiment, Waldenrath does not disclose that the annular hold down device extends into the mould void. Therefore, Waldenrath fails to disclose "a plurality of clamping members extending at least partially into the mould void for clamping a label at its perimeter within the mould void" as recited in claim 15.

There would be no motivation to modify Waldenrath to provide clamping means that extend into the mould cavity to clamp a label at its perimeter, because Waldenrath provides clamping means that either extend into the mould cavity and so do not clamp the sheet at its perimeter, or clamping means that clamp the sheet 6 at its edge but do not extend into the cavity. As

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there is nothing to suggest that the embodiments should be combined, any modification of Waldenrath to fall within the scope of the claimed invention must be as a result of hindsight.

The Examiner alleges that claims 15 and 24 are anticipated by US 5,618,567 (Hara et al.). Hara et al. discloses a manufacturing device for a multi-layer moulded product containing an upper mould 1 and lower mould 2. A woven fabric 6 is placed on support pads 3 and pins 5. Upper mould 1 is lowered to the lower mould to clamp the fabric 6 between the pads 3 and the lower face of the upper mould. The pins 5 are raised to push the fabric 6 against the inner face of upper mould 1. Molten resin is injected into the mould cavity and holes are provided in the resin where the pins 5 are located.

In Hara, the pins 5 do not clamp the perimeter of the fabric 6 and the pads 3 do not extend into the mould void. Therefore, there is no disclosure in Hara of "a plurality of clamping members extending at least partially into the mould void for clamping a label at its perimeter within the mould void" as recited in claim 15.

There would be no motivation to modify Hara to fall within the scope of the claimed invention because the object of Hara is to produce a front panel of an audio device with holes 8 to allow the egress of an acoustic signal. It is the pins 5 that create the holes for egress of an acoustic signal in the moulded product. Therefore, there would be no motivation to modify the pins 5 to clamp the fabric 6 at its perimeter, as

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it would be undesirable to have holes at the edges of a front panel for an audio device.

The Examiner alleges that claims 15, 16 and 19-21 are anticipated by US 5,575,056 (Nakagawa). Nakagawa discloses a method of injection molding an object that contains metal protrusions. Slide cores 3 clamp legs 52 of the metal insert 5 to hold the insert into position against the core 4. The slide cores 3 do not extend into the mould cavity 7. The insert 5 is supported on spacers above the core 4, however the spacers do not clamp the perimeter of the insert 5.

There is no disclosure in Nakagawa of "a plurality of clamping members extending at least partially into the mould void for clamping a label at its perimeter within the mould void" as recited in claim 15.

There would be no motivation to modify Nakagawa to fall within the scope of the claimed invention because there is nothing disclosed in Nakagawa to suggest that a label should have clamping means that extend into the mould void and clamp the label at its perimeter. Any modification must therefore be as a result of hindsight.

The Examiner alleges that claim 15 is anticipated by US 4,806,094 (Rhodes Jr et al.). Rhodes discloses a two stage process for manufacturing a plastic product. A plastic preform is molded from a film 18 that is held in place in the mould by extensions 34. Plastic is injected into injection space 28 to leave openings 36 in the preform where the extensions 34 were located. The preform is then inserted into a further injection mould where a foam layer 50 and vinyl

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layer 52 are added. Rhodes fails to disclose clamping means for clamping the preform at its perimeter that extend into the mould cavity. Therefore, there is no disclosure in Rhodes of "a plurality of clamping members extending at least partially into the mould void for clamping a label at its perimeter within the mould void" as recited in claim 15.

There would be no motivation to modify Rhodes to fall within the scope of the claimed invention because if Rhodes were modified to provide clamping means that extend into the mould void for clamping the preform in place, holes would be produced in the foam and vinyl layers that would be undesirable in the moulded product.

The Examiner alleges that claims 15 and 24 are anticipated by EP 343755 (van Dongen). Van Dongen discloses a method for making an injection molded shutter. The slats 12 of the shutter are formed by clamping a substrate foil 11 between flat sides 5 and 8 of the mould halves 1 and 2, and injecting plastic material into the plurality of cavities 3 that are formed. The plurality of clamping means 5, 8 define a plurality of mould cavities 3. The clamping means in Van Dongen define the mould cavities, they do not extend into the mould cavity. Also, as the foil 11 is a continuous sheet, the clamping means do not clamp the edge of the foil 11 within the mould void. Therefore, Van Dongen does not disclose "a plurality of clamping members extending at least partially into the mould void for clamping a label at its perimeter within the mould void" as recited in claim 15.

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There would be no motivation to modify Van Dongen to fall within the scope of the claimed invention because Van Dongen teaches that the clamping means are used to define the mould cavity. It would therefore be against the teachings of Van Dongen to provide clamping means that clamp the foil at its perimeter within a mould void because the mould cavities would not be formed.

The Examiner alleges that claim 15 and 26 are anticipated by US 3,403,883 (Simko). Simko discloses a method for forming an inlaid article. A blank 10 is clamped in a mould void by pins 28 so that apertures 15 in the blank 10 can be filled by injection moulding. The pins 28 do not clamp the blank 10 at its perimeter. Therefore, Simko fails to disclose "a plurality of clamping members extending at least partially into the mould void for clamping a label at its perimeter within the mould void" as recited in claim 15.

There would be no motivation to modify Simko to fall within the scope of the claimed invention because Simko teaches that the pins are positioned to bear against the rear face of the slotted blank. If the pins were positioned to clamp the blank at its perimeter, the pins would not bear against the rear face of the blank due to the shape of the blank.

The Examiner alleges that claims 15, 24 and 25 are anticipated by US 4,491,556 (Fuji et al.). Fuji discloses a method for making a carpet mat. The carpet 4 has a molded perimeter and base. The carpet 4 is held in place in the mould void by a lip 17 and a ridge 15-1 positioned directly beneath the lip 17. The lip 17 and ridge 15-1 provide the boundary between



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the edge forming cavities 13, 16 and the carpet 4. Lip 17 and ridge 15-1 do not extend into a mould cavity, they define the mould cavity. Therefore, Fuji does not disclose "a plurality of clamping members extending at least partially into the mould void for clamping a label at its perimeter within the mould void" as recited in claim 15.

There would be no motivation to modify Fuji to fall within the scope of the claimed invention because Fuji teaches that the carpet cavity 18 is tightly held and fixed between the lip 17 and ridge 15-1 and this prevents the molten resin from entering the carpet cavity 18. A person skilled in the art would not modify Fuji to provide clamping means that extend into the mould cavity because Fuji teaches that the carpet cavity 18 and the mould cavity 16, 13 should be isolated by the clamping means.

The Examiner alleges that claim 41 is anticipated by US 5,762,852 (Hettinga). Hettinga discloses a method of making a plastic hinged product. A deformable lamina 18 acts as the hinge between the two sections of the moulded product. The lamina 18 is placed in a mould unit 20 having a male section 22 and a female section 24. When the male and female mould sections are brought together, a partition wall 30 creates two mould cavities with the lamina 18 extending into both cavities and being clamped to the male mould part 22 by the wall partition 30. The wall partition 30 is the only clamping means for the lamina 18. The wall partition defines the two separate mould cavities, it does not extend into a mould void. The wall partition 30 also does not clamp the lamina 8 at its edges, it clamps the lamina at its centre.

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Therefore, Hettinga does not disclose "a plurality of clamping members extending at least partially into the mould void for clamping a label at its perimeter within the mould void" as recited in claim 15 or "a plurality of clamping members extending at least partially into the first mould void for clamping the label at its perimeter within the first mould void and a plurality of clamping members extending at least partially into the second mould void for clamping the label at its perimeter within the second mould void" as recited in claim 41.

There would be no motivation to modify Hettinga to provide clamping means for clamping a label at its perimeter, because Hettinga teaches that the lamina should be clamped at its center to provide a hinge for the moulded product. There would be no motivation to modify Hettinga to provide clamping means that extend into the mould void because Hettinga discloses that the partition wall is used for defining the two separate mould voids.

The Examiner alleges that claims 15, 41 and 42 are anticipated by US 6,846,169 (Kobayashi et al.). Kobayashi discloses a method and apparatus for producing a multilayer product that has different skin materials 1, 2 adhered to the surface. The skin materials are placed in a mould and held in place by resin blocking plates 41, 42. The blocking plates 41, 42 also regulate the flow of the plastic material into the mould cavity to ensure the interface between the two skin materials 1, 2 remains of uniform shape.

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In an alternative embodiment, the edge of skin materials 1, 2 are clamped in a holding member 70a while material is injected into the mould cavity. The holding member 70a clamps the two skin materials together along the interface of the two skin materials. The clamping member 70a does not clamp the material at its perimeter.

Kobayashi does not disclose "a plurality of clamping members extending at least partially into the mould void for clamping a label at its perimeter within the mould void" as recited in claim 15 or "a plurality of clamping members extending at least partially into the first mould void for clamping the label at its perimeter within the first mould void and a plurality of clamping members extending at least partially into the second mould void for clamping the label at its perimeter within the second mould void" as recited in claim 41.

There would be no motivation to modify Kobayashi to provide clamping means for clamping a label at its perimeter because Kobayashi only discloses that the two skin materials are clamped at their interface to form a uniform boundary portion. A person skilled in the art would not modify Kobayashi to provide clamping around the perimeter of the skin materials because this would not regulate the arrival time of the resin at the boundary portion between the two skin materials and would not solve the problem of distortions in the boundary portions between the two skin materials.

The Examiner alleges that claims 15 and 24-26 are anticipated by US 5,406,699 (Oyama). Oyama discloses a molded electronics

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package. The method utilizes a press molding method. The substrate 12 is clamped in the mould void by projecting portions 115, 116. The projections 115, 116 do not extend into the mould cavity, they define the edge of mould cavity. Also, the projections 115, 116 do not clamp the perimeter of the substrate 12.

Oyama does not disclose "a plurality of clamping members extending at least partially into the mould void for clamping a label at its perimeter within the mould void" as recited in claim 15.

There would be no motivation to modify Oyama to fall within the scope of the claimed invention because the clamping means in Oyama define the mould cavities. If Oyama was modified to provide clamping means that extend into the mould void and clamp the substrate at its perimeter, the apparatus of Oyama would not produce the desired product because the mould voids would not be defined.

The Examiner alleges that claims 15 and 28 are anticipated by JP 05-008251 (Nakayama). Nakayama discloses a method of forming a laminate by holding a sheet 4 in a mould cavity by sticking needles 5 into the sheet 4 and injecting material into the mould cavity while the sheet 4 held in place. The needles 5 in Nakayama prevent lateral movement of sheet 4 in the mould cavity but they do not clamp the sheet 4. The needles 5 also do not clamp the sheet 4 at its perimeter.

Therefore, Nakayama does not disclose "a plurality of clamping members extending at least partially into the mould void for

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clamping a label at its perimeter within the mould void" as recited in claim 15.

There would be no motivation to modify Nakayama to fall within the scope of the present invention because Nakayama teaches that the sheet is fixed by needles, not by clamping the sheet. Any modification of Nakayama to fall within the scope of the claimed invention must be as a result of hindsight.

The Examiner has also cited US 4,162,138 (Byrne) to reject claim 27 for obviousness. Byrne discloses an injection mould for encapsulating inserts. An insert 19 is clamped in the mould cavity 17 by clamping pins 14, 24. The clamping pins 14, 24 do not clamp the insert at its perimeter. Therefore, Byrne does not disclose "a plurality of clamping members extending at least partially into the mould void for clamping a label at its perimeter within the mould void" as recited in claim 15.

As there is no suggestion in Byrne of clamping a label at its perimeter within the mould void, any modification of Byrne to fall within the claimed invention must be as a result of hindsight.

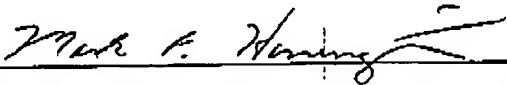
It should now be apparent that the invention as defined by the independent claims is both novel and non-obvious.

For all of the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now present in the application are clearly novel and patentable over the prior art of record. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested. Should any unresolved issue remain,

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the examiner is invited to call applicants' attorney at the  
telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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